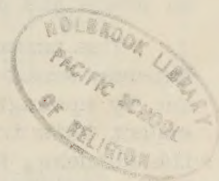


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IN THIS ISSUE:

Opposition to Emperor's Proposed U.S. Visit
Using the Imperial Dignity
Recalling a Massacre and Struggling for Acceptance
Book on Japanese Imperialism Stirs Controversy
Miscellaneous: MODEN's Retreat
Headline-Making Events



WHY DO MANY JAPANESE CHRISTIANS OPPOSE THE EMPEROR'S PROPOSED VISIT TO THE U.S.?

by Toru Kuze

EDITORS' NOTE: Many people, especially Americans, consider travel and mobility something of an "inalienable right" which fosters enlightenment and other benefits. Such people may wonder why many Japanese Christians oppose, or want to put conditions on, the proposed visit to the U.S. by Emperor Hirohito. The following explanation is written by Mr. Kuze, assistant professor of Economics at Meiji Gakuin University.

When President Nixon and Premier Tanaka met at the conference table in Washington in the last days of July, they agreed on mutual visits by the President to Japan and by the Emperor to the U.S. Without commenting on Japanese enthusiasm (or lack of it) concerning the President's welcome here, it must be noted that most Japanese, including Japanese Christians, have negative feelings or openly oppose the Emperor's visit to the U.S.

Why do so many people disagree with the Emperor's plans? There are a variety of reasons, none of them simple. The most radical disagreement comes from two relatively small groups--anti-American and anti-Emperor.

The first group claims that the U.S. "cold war" policy was the cause of the Vietnam War, that this policy remains in effect today, and that, consequently, any act to strengthen the ties between the U.S. and Japan is nonsense. The second small group doesn't recognize the Emperor and therefore cannot recognize his visits. They claim that the position of the Emperor in the Constitution--as the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people--is not substantially different from his position in the pre-war Constitution as the holy, absolute ruler. Therefore, they oppose every official act of the Emperor.

Many more Japanese, especially Japanese Christians, assume a less radical stance: they find serious problems in U.S. foreign policy, but they also find the possibility of firm friendship between the U.S. and Japan based on peace and democracy, and they believe it is necessary to make the possibility a reality.

The question for these people is: Will Emperor Hirohito's visit to the U.S. have a positive or negative effect on furthering true friendship between the two peoples?

(continued on page 2)

JCAN Sept. 14 *
p. 2 (82) *

OPPOSITION TO EMPEROR'S PROPOSED U.S. VISIT (cont'd)

The Japanese people are very conscious of history, and we cannot forget that Emperor Hirohito is the same person under whose name Japan invaded Asian countries and declared war against the Allied nations, including the U.S. Some people say, "Yes, but the Emperor was, at that time too, merely a symbol and not the real ruler." Even if this was true, then he was the symbol of militarism and authoritative power, and we remember his portrait as "Generalissimo" in the military uniform.

Is such a man really qualified to represent the Japanese people in the U.S.? Can a symbol of militarism and authoritative power strengthen a friendship based on peace and democracy?

The answer to both of these questions could be "Yes"--but only if the Emperor would begin his visit by confessing the guilt for Japan's old militarism and by apologizing to the American people. However, there is little reason to expect this to happen. The Emperor has never spoken anything like an apology to the Chinese, Korean and other Asian peoples who have suffered the most from Japanese military aggression done in his name. Furthermore, when the Emperor visited Europe two years ago, he disappointed many Japanese as well as many Europeans through his failure to apologize.

The same disappointment, even disgust, can be predicted if and when the Emperor visits the U.S. Regretfully, some Americans, those who expect a militaristic, reactionary Japan, will embrace him, announcing that the Japanese people are their friends. But those Americans who hope for progress in the direction of peace and democracy in Japan will only see their hopes damaged and distorted.

But this is not all.

If the Emperor's visit to the U.S. is successful and he is warmly welcomed by the American people, then his authority over the Japanese people, and the ability of the conservative Government to invoke this authority toward militaristic and other ends, will be greatly strengthened. The Liberal Democratic Party's willingness to use and abuse the Emperor's authority is already clear. One example was on May 28 when the Director-General of the Self Defense Agency, Keikichi Masuhara, after a meeting with the Emperor, announced that the Emperor desired a larger and stronger Japanese military. (Masuhara's bringing the Emperor into parliamentary debates on Japan's military size led to public outcries which forced his resignation.)

For all of these reasons, a respectable majority of all Japanese people, and as many as two-thirds of all Japanese Christians, feel that the Emperor's planned visit to the U.S. is not only unnecessary but will have negative effects on both Japan-U.S. relations and Japan's domestic political situation.

USING THE IMPERIAL DIGNITY

The current furore over the status of the Japanese Emperor should come as no surprise. What other symbol can thoughtful Japanese leaders invoke in their bid to chart a new course for the nation? In the confusion over the nation's future, the reassurance represented by the Japanese Emperor in the face of uncomfortable changes in basic national policy is of major importance. At the same time, the Japanese people themselves are changing their aspirations and demanding more of life than satisfaction of their economic wants.

The protests in Tokyo over the invocation of the Emperor by leaders of the Government are not surprising, either. Respect for the Emperor, a trait which refuses to disappear from the Japanese character, is combined with a realization of how easily, in the past, the imperial dignity was used to sweeten unworthy and even criminal behaviour by politicians who refused to set any bounds to the power which they believed their country should enjoy. Under the surface, the anxiety is natural that two-and-a-half decades of international self-abasement should provoke a counter-reaction among literate people with no reason to suspect that Japan's ambitions between 1890 and 1945 were pursued any more ruthlessly than those of Britain, the US and the Soviet Union.

(continued on page 3)

The danger--and this menace will increase in the immediate future--is that if Japan is further isolated from its former

Western associates and forced into closer ties with the Chinese and Soviet giants, Tokyo will seek to defend its national independence and integrity with a modern arsenal of destructive weapons. Such military might, it is reasonable to fear, could be used to bully other Asian states into one-sided sacrifices of their own interests to suit Japanese wishes. The worry is not about any dreams of a return to divinity by Emperor Hirohito but rather about the capacity of unscrupulous Japanese politicians to use him for their own ends.

--Far Eastern Economic Review, excerpt from June 18 editorial

RECALLING A MASSACRE AND STRUGGLING FOR ACCEPTANCE

Around noon on September 1, 1923, a devastating earthquake hit metropolitan Tokyo, closely followed by raging fires which destroyed 64 per cent of the houses in the city. When the dust and smoke cleared, 100,000 citizens were dead and some 500,000 injured.

Two weeks ago, on the 50th anniversary of the disaster, memories and fears were revived in an outpouring of discussions and articles in Japan. In the midst of this interest--mostly concentrated on predicting what will happen if a similar earthquake hits in the near future--an important meeting was held in Tokyo on Sunday afternoon, September 2. A firsthand report by John Nakajima follows.

The mood among the 1800 persons at the Kyōritsu Kōdō Hall was heavy and painful as they recalled the brutal murders of between 6,000 and 7,000 Koreans in Japan following the Great Kanto Earthquake. But out of the pain rose renewed affirmations to continue the Korean struggle against Japanese discrimination and fear in all of its forms.

During a memorial for the massacred Koreans, the participants recalled the situation on that fateful day 50 years ago: Beginning one hour after the earthquake, entirely groundless rumors spread among the Japanese that lawless Koreans were setting fires, poisoning wells, bombing buildings, and raping women. Some sources say the rumors were deliberately planted by the chief of police of Tokyo.

For two weeks the entire metropolitan area was in utter panic and chaos. More than 3,600 vigilante groups were organized and they proceeded to brutally attack and kill every Korean in sight, including those in police custody. The incident was never officially reported nor investigated. Even prominent Christian leaders kept silent. It was only after World War II that the fact began to be known by concerned historians. But it has never received wide attention among the Japanese public.

The "9.2 Meeting" this month was planned mostly by the young people who form a support group for the legal defense of Chon Suk Park, who has appealed to the court for a job which the Hitachi Co. offered and then retracted when his Korean identity was revealed. The National Christian Council's Committee on the Human Rights of Alien Residents, and the United Church's Committee on Social Action helped sponsor the meeting.

The young sponsors distributed comprehensive mimeographed materials detailing months of research regarding the 1923 massacres. Their emphasis, however, was not on looking back a half a century ago. The intention of four speakers in Part One of the program was rather to alert the public to the reality that there still exists today the same kind of discriminatory mentality among the general Japanese public. Park's denial of job opportunity is only one illustration out of thousands of discriminatory acts against the Korean residents in Japan.

Many of the Koreans here today are never sure if they can escape the same massacre if another calamity occurs in the future. "Each one of you," the young leaders stressed, "must find out these facts by yourself, not merely relying upon what we are telling you."

(continued on page 4)

Part Two of the program included four Korean speakers--two writers, a historian and a pastor. It was a rare occasion since the speakers represented both North and South Korean affiliations. They spoke as one in revealing the unhappy relationship between the Japanese and Korean peoples. Although Koreans are committed to educating their children toward maturity, Japanese discrimination often leads these children into crime said one speaker, shedding tears.

Dr. In Ha Lee, General Secretary of the Korean Christian Church in Japan, made a comprehensive summary of the situation. To the Japanese, he stressed that Japanese identity can only be found in healthy relationships with other peoples. To the Koreans, he appealed for a restoration of their own identity, to know who they are, to call themselves by Korean names and not hide themselves among the Japanese.

Heavy and painful though the whole atmosphere was, the 9.2 Meeting was a success. It was successful because the audience showed the potentiality and the desire to scatter the seeds of a more hopeful reality. It was also successful because Park's legal defense group received substantial contributions for their cause.

As one of the speakers declared, among the majority of unconsciously discriminatory Japanese, the young sponsors of this meeting are the new type of Japanese people upon whom much of the future of Japan depends.

BOOK ON JAPANESE IMPERIALISM STIRS CONTROVERSY

"Countless half-truths, distortions and omissions color the material, rendering it practically useless for scholarly or educational purposes."

--Wallace H. Offutt, Jr., August 21 *Japan Times*

"This book is by far the most informative and in many ways the most penetrating analysis that has come my way so far."

--Geoffrey Barraclough, June 14 *New York Review of Books*

These comments typify the controversy now raging over the recently published *Japanese Imperialism Today: Co-Prosperity in Greater East Asia*, by Jon Halliday and Gavan McCormack (Penguin Books, 1973, with forthcoming edition by Monthly Review Press and a Japanese edition by *Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha*).

The controversy began in the May 21 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hongkong) in which Jack Butler wrote that the book "bears as much resemblance to Japanese and Asian realities as 'Madam Butterfly'". The two British authors, in a June 24 full-page letter to the editor, dismissed Butler's "abuse and innuendo" and went on to document the wide-range of sources on which the book is based, including the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, *Chuo Koron* and dozens of other established periodicals.

The pro-Government *Japan Times* published a completely devastating review on August 21--completely in the sense of Offutt's emotionally-charged but little-documented dismissal of the book as "diatribe" by authors who "simply have no credibility." Offutt even dismissed the word *Imperialism* in the title as "radical jargon". He was particularly annoyed when the authors claimed that the Emperor has been and is being used by the right-wing to effect a revised Constitution and a revived military. Offutt called this "drivel".

McCormack, now on sabbatical from Leeds University and residing in missionary housing in Tokyo, wrote a brief letter to the editor of the *Japan Times* on August 30. In it he simply suggested that readers consult the book and decide for themselves whether the "prejudices and distortions are to be found in the eye of the authors or, just possibly, of your reviewer."

Other reviewers (particularly in the West; Japanese reviews are expected this week) tend to either love or hate the book. The division line seems to be whether one accepts the legitimacy of Marxist analysis or not. The book is an impressive weaving together of heretofore scattered and hard to find reports of economic data and political decision-making. However, the authors forthrightly state that their purpose is not simply to provide information but to "assist people everywhere to defeat all imperialisms, Western and Japanese...."

(continued on page 5)

This advocacy approach--and the intermittent warnings about the use and abuse of Japan's might in Asia--not only alienated Butler and Offutt but will also, unfortunately, limit sales of the book to non-Marxist audiences who could gain much from the well-documented research. Still, the authors deserve credit for being up-front about their political beliefs. They deserve even more credit for being the first to organize thousands of isolated facts and reports into a logically organized, well-documented whole.

Japanese Imperialism Today is part of a series of "beware of Japan" books written by foreigners recently (e.g., Albert Axelbank's *Black Star Over Japan* and Herman Kahn's *The Emerging Japanese Super-State*). However, while most of such books concentrate on what *could* happen in Japan in the 1980s, the present book concentrates on events from 1945 through March, 1972. The message of the book is that present-day Japan provides enough deep concern for the peoples of Asia. Spectacular projections may sell more books, but the authors show that the problems are very here and now and not just in some prophesied future.

Opponents of this book have said and will continue to say that dark forebodings about Japan's role in the world simply do not do justice to a beautiful, essentially pacifist Japanese people who are only seeking their rightful identity in the world based on their intelligence and hard work. This argument is fine as far as it goes, but if it is carried too far only serves to excuse the abuses of power by blinding us to the demonic side of national pride and self-justification.

Furthermore, the opponents imply that books like this will only feed anti-Japanese feelings abroad, at the very time when more understanding is direly needed. The opponents even suggest that Halliday and McCormack set out to malign the Japanese people--and nothing could be further from the truth. If the authors are harsh in their analysis of directions being taken by the *power structure*, they also show a deep respect and admiration for the Japanese *people*.

Only out of such respect could McCormack and Halliday maintain their genuine optimism about the future. They assert that the Japanese people "have repeatedly demonstrated their desire to oppose all manifestations of imperialism," and they predict that this "militancy" will "surely liberate both the Japanese people themselves and all the peoples of Asia from Japanese imperialism."

The facts in this book are indisputably part of the historical record. The interpretation which underlies the facts may or may not meet everyone's philosophical definition of "Truth." However, most readers will find that, if Truth lies somewhere between pronouncements by the Japanese power structure and the analysis in this book, then Truth is closer to the book. For this reason alone, those of us inured to a daily diet of the *Japan Times* owe ourselves at least a brief interruption, if not a continuing education, by reading this thorough-going study.

--reviewed by the Editors

MODEN'S DIVERSITY ENLIVENS ANNUAL RETREAT

The mood at the 23rd Annual Retreat of MODEN (Japan Christian Council for Evangelism with Sightless People) might be summed up in the words of the late Dr. Martin Luther King concerning the Black struggle in the U.S.: "Our freedom means your liberation."

The 130 participants who gathered in Ueda City, Nagano Prefecture in August expressed many diverse opinions about what MODEN should be, but all were united in affirming the responsibility of the sightless to be a real neighbor to the sighted. Instead of silence and dependence on the sighted to bear their burdens, the sightless made it known loud and clear that they would reach out to the sighted, helping them to understand about and cooperate in freeing sightless persons in Japan from discrimination in homes, schools and the larger society.

The nation-wide character of the annual retreat and biennial assembly also invited a wide diversity of opinions on certain matters, pointing up the complexities of leading a group with a variety of viewpoints. For this reason MODEN asked Rev. Kozo Kashiwai, chairman for the past 22 years, to serve another term in spite of his illness. The understanding is that Rev. Kashiwai will retire at the assembly when another person is found who can represent the

JAPAN-KOREA NEGOTIATIONS AT STAND-STILL OVER ABDUCTION OF THE KOREAN OPPOSITION LEADER KIM DAE JUNG: Japanese Ambassador to South Korea Ushiroku met last week with ROK Premier Kim Jong Pil and requested that abducted opposition leader Kim be returned to Tokyo where he was residing before being kidnapped August 8 and subsequently put under house arrest in Seoul. Since the Metropolitan Police Department has linked the First Secretary of the South Korean Embassy, Mr. Kim Dong Woon, to the incident as an accessory after the fact, the situation has developed into an international incident with serious diplomatic implications for both countries. A request that Kim Dong Woon appear for questioning in Japan was rejected by the South Korean Embassy in Tokyo (Sept. 5).

As a result of these developments, bilateral negotiations have come to a stand-still and a Japanese economic mission to South Korea has been postponed indefinitely. Opposition party leaders in the Diet continue to question basic government policy in relation to the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. They insist that the matter has become a breach of Japanese national sovereignty. The opposition parties want a reevaluation of economic policy in relation to Korea in the light of the way South Korea has refused to cooperate with the Japanese investigation.

Despite the clear evidence that the ROK Government was deeply involved in the abduction, the Tanaka government's response to the probing of the opposition parties has been "It cannot yet be determined whether this case is a breach of national sovereignty or not since the matter is still under investigation". The Tanaka government has no intention of changing its policies toward South Korea.

THE JAPAN SELF DEFENSE FORCES HAVE BEEN DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL:

While one-third of the present personnel of the Japanese Self Defense Forces are located in Hokkaido, residents of Naganuma Town in Hokkaido have fought the government over building a Nike missile base in a nearby national forest preserve. After a four-year long dispute between the residents and the government, the Sapporo District Court last week ruled in favor of the residents by declaring the Self Defense Forces unconstitutional under Article 9 of the Japanese "peace" Constitution. The ruling indicates that the construction of the missile base is in violation of the clause which renounces Japan's war-making capabilities. The ruling indicated that the Self Defense Forces are the very land, sea and air forces which the post-war, U.S.-inspired Constitution prohibits Japan from possessing. The court indicated that in view of the scale of the Self Defense Forces, such an organization is clearly unconstitutional.

Immediately after the ruling was handed down the government decided to appeal the decision. The Chief Cabinet Secretary expressed his regret over the ruling but indicated that he had no intention of changing the course and plans of the present forces. The government was shocked over the ruling but is confident that the district court ruling will be overturned by the Supreme Court. The opposition parties have very much welcomed the ruling.

The constitutional limits on the Self Defense Forces has never been fully taken up within the government. Some question the advisability of leaving such a central issue to the of the courts alone. There are many who advocate resolving the issue on the basis of a national referendum. Others, especially on the right, feel the time is ripe for revising the Constitution to bring it into line with Japan's "military needs".